

"The Siriono are proud parents. They spend a great deal of time in fondling and playing with their children and are delighted to display them to anyone foreign to their camp. I found that one of the best ways to gain the confidence of the Indians was by taking an interest in their children: in bringing them presents, in playing with them, and in curing them of such ailments as hookworm. Their interest in children was also clearly reflected in their conversations with me, for I was bombarded with questions as to how many children I had, where they were living, etc. In order to avoid some explanation of my bachelorhood, which they would not have understood or which would have seemed ridiculous to them, I always told them that I had a wife and several children (I even supplied the names) waiting for me at home, and that as soon as I had obtained the information which my 'father' had sent me to gather, I was going to return to my family."

1: Holmberg--76 [7]

116, 842, 826, 858,

(1941-42) 1950

Siriono

"Males are definitely preferred. A pregnant woman always expresses a desire to give birth to a boy. The preference for males, however, is not much reflected in the amount of love or care given an infant. Parents spend as much time fondling a girl as a boy. Even clubfooted children and other deformed infants are shown no lack of partiality in this respect."

1: Holmberg--77
116, 152, 181, 858

(1941-42) 1950

Siriono

"The transition from infancy to childhood in Siriono society is a very gradual one. Not only are there no sharp breaks in the process of growing up, but from the time one is a child until one assumes the role of an adult, life is relatively carefree and undisciplined. In fact, this pattern of freedom so carries on throughout adult life that it can be truly said of the Siriono that they are a highly undisciplined people."

"Food habits are among the first patterns of behavior that every young child must learn. After weaning, taboo foods are simply withheld from a child, but as he grows older and more omnivorous, [78] he is threatened with disease and abandonment if he partakes of forbidden foods to which he may be exposed while his parents are not around. The list of foods taboo to him, however, is not long. Among the animals he must never eat is the harpy eagle. This taboo is easy to obey, since this bird is rarely bagged; only two were shot during my residence at Tibaera. The harpy eagle is regarded as the king of the birds by the Siriono, and the eating of its flesh is believed to cause illness (it is never stated what kind) to anyone but an old person. Likewise taboo until one is aged are the anteater, lest one sire or give birth to clubfooted children, and the howler monkey, because it is an 'old' animal with a beard and therefore dangerous to eat when one is young. Children are also forbidden the meat of the owl monkey, lest they spend sleepless nights and be restless, and the coati, lest they break out with sores on their bodies. Embryos and the young offspring of animals also cannot be eaten by children, lest they have miscarriages in adulthood. "

1: Holmberg--79-80
116, 224, 858, 868

(1941-42) 1950

Siriono

"At about the age of 8, a boy begins to accompany his father on the hunt. This is really the beginning of his serious education as a hunter. Until this time most of his hunting has been confined to the immediate environs of the hut. When a boy first starts to accompany his father, he makes only about one excursion per week, but as he gradually becomes hardened to the jungle, his trips away from camp become more frequent and of longer duration. On these expeditions the boy gradually learns when, where, and how to track and stalk game. His father allows him to take easy shots, so as to reinforce his interest in hunting. The boy is given light loads of game to carry in from the jungle, and if he kills an animal of any importance, such as a peccary or coati, he is decorated with feathers like a mature hunter. During all this time, of course, he is also learning to make bows and arrows and to repair those which have been broken on the hunt. Hence, by the time a boy has reached the age of 12, he is already a full-fledged hunter and is able to sup[80]ply a household of his own with game. At this age, girls, too, are ready for the responsibilities of adulthood."